

ILLINOIS

HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL

COMPRISING THE ESSENTIAL FACTS
OF ITS
PLANTING AND GROWTH
AS A
PROVINCE, COUNTY, TERRITORY, AND STATE.

DERIVED FROM THE MOST AUTHENTIC SOURCES, INCLUDING ORIGINAL
DOCUMENTS AND PAPERS. TOGETHER WITH CAREFULLY PREPARED
STATISTICAL TABLES RELATING TO POPULATION, FINANCIAL
ADMINISTRATION, INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS, INTERNAL
GROWTH, POLITICAL AND MILITARY EVENTS.

BY

JOHN MOSES,

EX-COUNTY JUDGE OF SCOTT COUNTY; PRIVATE SECRETARY OF GOV. YATES; MEMBER
OF THE TWENTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ILLINOIS; SECRETARY OF
THE BOARD OF RAILROAD AND WAREHOUSE COMMISSIONERS,
1880-3; SECRETARY AND LIBRARIAN OF THE
CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY;
ETC., ETC.

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CHAPTER II.

Aborigines—Origin, Location, and Habits.

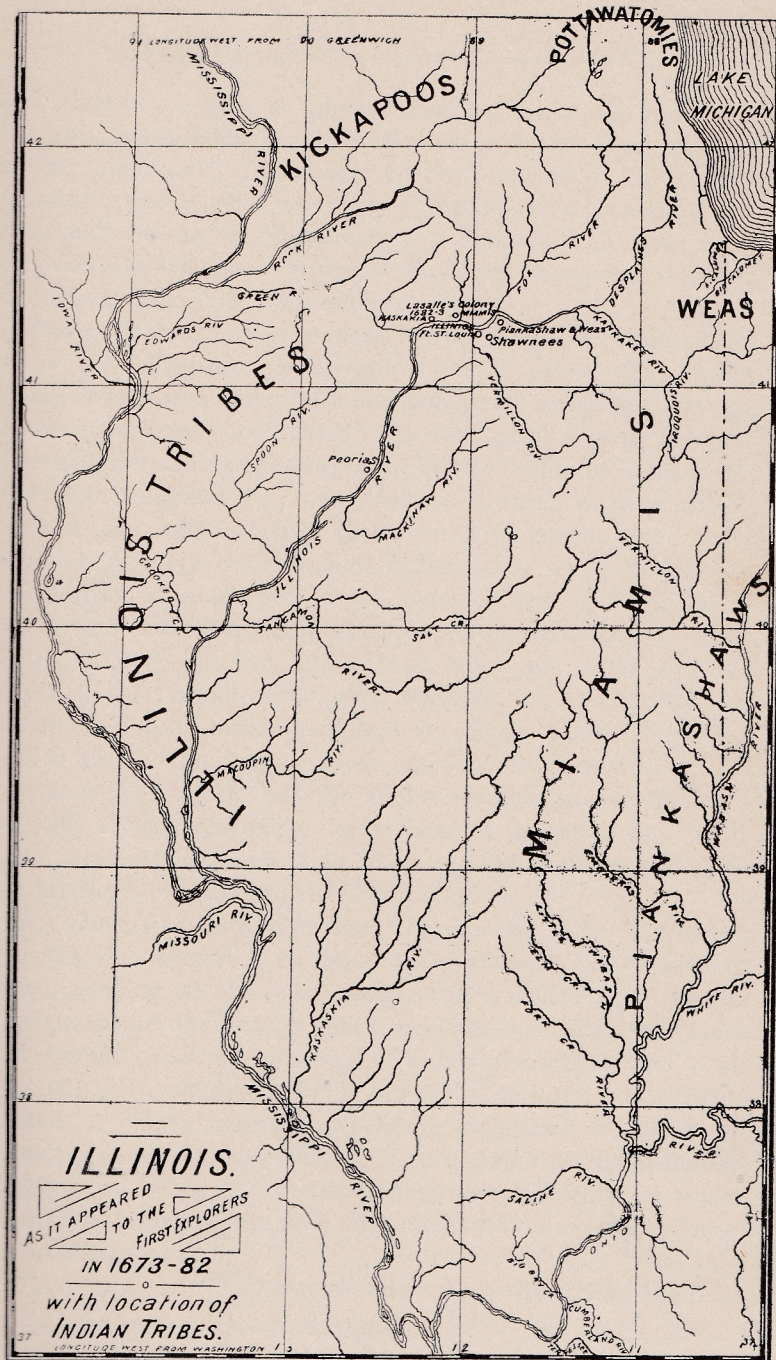
HOW the inhabitants found upon the American continent by the first white explorers came to receive the misnomer of Indians, in consequence of the mistaken belief of Columbus that in the West-India Islands he had found the eastern shores of India, is too well known to call for repetition here.

Of the origin and previous history of the red men, scarcely anything is known. The nature and extent of their former civilization is left to extremely vague tradition and conjecture. That there had been a people more advanced than those found here by Europeans, the mounds erected by them and the stone and copper weapons and utensils showing their handiwork, afford us the only, but not very satisfactory, evidence. Whence they came, whither they went, and at what periods, no one can tell.

Their successors found in this country on the arrival of the white man, with the one exception of the Shawnees, who claimed a foreign extraction—asserted that they were natives, and that they came up out of the earth. But their traditions all pointed to the fact that they came from the West, while their white conquerors came from the East. They were divided into different tribes, who, wandering over hills and valleys, had apportioned these among themselves by indefinite boundaries, which were held by an uncertain possession and title.

They have been classified into five groups, according to language and dialects, as follows: the Algonquins, inhabiting the country from Nova Scotia to the mouth of the James River, thence west to the mouth of the Ohio, thence northward to Hudson Bay; the Iroquois, south and east of Lake Ontario, within the above territory; the Appalachians, south of the Algonquins and east of the Mississippi, the Dakotas, or Sioux, west of the Mississippi and north of the Missouri and Platte rivers; and the Shoshones, south and west of the Dakotas.

Their numbers in 1639 were estimated at about one hundred



and ninety thousand, as follows: Algonquins, ninety thousand; Iroquois, comprehending the Hurons and the Five Nations, twenty thousand; Cherokees, twelve thousand; Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Muskhogees, sixty-three thousand; Natchez, four thousand; beside the Shoshones and Dakotas.* In the divisions and subdivisions of tribes at this time there were included two hundred and fifty-two different names.

These red men of the new world, wherever situated, in rocky New England, in Southern forests, or on the prairies of the West, were essentially the same, and altogether savage. Their government was tribal and each chief a petty despot; their religion was a superstition—a blind worship of some undefined Great Spirit; they were without learning or any knowledge of the world around them; they possessed no definite ideas of property or of human rights; they knew nothing of architecture, of mechanics, or of manufactures. They lived in cabins and were clothed in skins; their implements and arms were of the rudest sort, made from stone and wood and the bones of the buffalo; they were ruthless and revengeful, narrow-minded and brutal, dissolute, lazy, selfish, gluttonous, polygamous, and lustful; they had no enjoyments except the chase and dance, no music but the rudest sounds, giving forth no melody. Their relaxations were those of the indolent; "their great business in life was to procure food and devour it, to subdue their enemies and scalp them."†

Not the stoics they have been represented to be, but rather epicures, who preferred to enjoy themselves at the expense of duty, avoiding all hardship and peril. Hence their feeble, capricious, and ineffective military operations. Yet they were not without great leaders, men of quick perceptions and resolute will, possessing remarkable powers of oratory, and capable of acts of daring courage and heroic fortitude; while in not a few instances, these untrained, unreasoning children of nature, knowing no guide but instinct, displayed a fidelity to treaty obligations which might well put to shame the civilized, Christianized Caucasian.

Their mode of living was as follows: in the spring the tribe

* Bancroft's "United States," III., p. 253.

† McKinney's "Indian Tribes."

assembled at its village or favorite camping-ground, and there remained until the time came for hunting. Here crops were raised—the women and old men doing the work—skins were dressed, and preparations made for hunting and trapping in the fall, when the tribe, separating into different bands, departed from their villages to occupy their winter-quarters.

They were unacquainted with the use of iron or copper, and had formed but the crudest notions of trade. If left to themselves, they would doubtless have continued as they were found, ignorant, savage, and untamable. Three hundred years of opportunity, afforded by contact with the white race, have left them unbenefited and unimproved by the connection. By adopting the vices of the white man they have become enfeebled, and by learning the use of firearms they have been the better enabled to carry out their savage propensities. It is only when the blood of the white race has been infused into the veins of the red, and in that proportion, that the civilization of the former has been understood, appreciated, or adopted by the latter.

During the period of the early explorations of the West, from 1673 to 1720, that portion of it called "the country of the Illinois" was found to be inhabited by seven different tribes of Indians, namely: the Illinois, Miamis, Kickapoos—including the Mascoutins, Pottawatomies, Sacs and Foxes, Winnebagoes, and Shawnees. These all belonged to the Algonquin family, except the Winnebagoes who were classed with the Dakotas.

The names by which different tribes were known and designated were not generally of their own selection, but such as were bestowed upon them by some other tribe, or by the French, to denote some supposed peculiarity. Thus the principal tribe, denominated the Illinois, called themselves L-in-ni-wek. This collective name, as applied to a nation or confederacy, included five separate tribes, called the Kaskaskias, Cahokias, Tamaroas, Peorias, and Mitchigamies—the latter, from whom Lake Michigan was named and near whose borders they for a time encamped, having been adopted from the Quapaws living west of the Mississippi.

The Illinois had their possessions along the river of that name, beginning on the Desplaines and Kankakee, and claimed the country adjacent thereto and on the west of these streams

to and even beyond the Mississippi, and as far south as its confluence with the Ohio. Their favorite and principal locations, however, were in the central and northern portions of what afterward became the State, where they had seventeen villages. The largest of these, their metropolis, was situated on the Illinois River in LaSalle County, one mile south of the celebrated rock subsequently fortified as Fort St. Louis, and adjoining the present town of Utica. This village was called La Vantum, and, according to Father Membre, in 1680 contained a population of seven or eight thousand, not including the Kaskaskias. The chief village of the Peorias was on the lake of that name, while that of the Tamaroas and Cahokias was below the mouth of the Illinois River and nearly opposite St. Louis.

The character generally given to the Illinois Indians by the French missionaries does not differ from that of other tribes, and shows that they were not entitled to the distinction of superiority which their name implied. While they were "tall of stature, strong and robust, the swiftest runners in the world, and good archers, proud, yet affable," they were "idle, revengeful, jealous, cunning, dissolute, and thievish."* They lived on Indian corn, beans, and other vegetables, including fourteen kinds of roots, fruits and nuts, and fish and game.

It is not surprising that a country so beautiful and productive, and so full of the finest game, as that inhabited by the Illinois Indians should be coveted by the surrounding tribes. The Dakotas (Sioux) had made hostile incursions upon it from the west, the Sacs and Foxes from the north, and also the Kickapoos and Pottawatomies from the northeast. Its fame, indeed, had spread to the farther east, where the warlike Iroquois, having heard of this splendid hunting-ground, determined to dispossess its occupants and hold it for themselves. They had made frequent raids upon it prior to 1673, in most of which they had been successful, claiming, indeed, to have conquered the country.

In one of these warlike expeditions, however, through the heroism of an Indian woman, they had to acknowledge a defeat. They had attacked an Illinois village on the banks of a river,

* Father Membre.

and had succeeded in driving out the inhabitants with great carnage. A young, courageous, and patriotic woman of the tribe, called Watch-e-kee—the orthography of which has been changed to Watseka—having ascertained that their enemies were then exulting over their victory and rioting on the spoils secured in the village, urged her countrymen to take advantage of the situation and attack them in return. But the warriors, smarting under the sense of recent humiliation, refused to respond to her urgent call. She pointed to the darkness of the night, and the almost certain chances of a successful surprise. The “braves” still refusing, she called for volunteers from among the squaws, urging upon them that death in battle was preferable to torture and captivity, which might be their fate on the morrow. The women came forward in great numbers and offered to follow their brave leader. Seeing the determined courage of their wives and daughters, the men became ashamed of their cowardice, and, inspired with a valor they had not lately exhibited, rushed to arms. A plan of attack was speedily arranged, and the Iroquois, being taken unawares, in turn suffered an overwhelming defeat. The stream near which this engagement took place was called the Iroquois, as has been the county through which it flows, while to the county-seat of the latter has been given the name of the heroic Indian girl who compassed the overthrow of her enemies.

When the French came to the Illinois country they were received not only without opposition, but with decided manifestations of friendliness. With their superior arms and equipments of war, the Illinois had the sagacity to see that they might prove most valuable allies and defenders. They welcomed their priests and listened apparently with great favor to the scheme of religion presented by them with so much zeal and fervor; and the friendship thus begun was never afterward interrupted. The two peoples, so different in birth and civilization, had yet so many characteristics in common that their mutual attachment was not unnatural. They hunted and traded together, fought together, and eventually many of them intermarried and lived together. It was an alliance which, although at first beneficial to the French, in the end proved fatal to both parties.

Having heard that the Illinois were again assembled in large numbers at their village of La Vantum, and of the presence among them of some Frenchmen, who might divert the valuable trade in furs from their British and Dutch allies to the French, the Iroquois, in September, 1680, with six hundred picked warriors, made an attack upon them, killing twelve hundred and driving the rest beyond the Mississippi, with a loss of only thirty men. Further particulars of this foray will be given hereafter.

The French having established themselves at the Rock, which they had fortified and garrisoned, the Illinois, under their favor and protection, again occupied their villages in that vicinity, with other tribes invited by LaSalle. On March 20, 1684, the Iroquois again came in great force and laid siege to this fort for seven days, but were finally repulsed and compelled to retreat with great loss. This was their last invasion of the Illinois country, and from this time until 1702, when the post of Fort St. Louis was disbanded as a military establishment, the Illinois remained at peace with their neighbors, and were prospered in their hunting and trading with their new-found friends.

About the year 1700, the Kaskaskias, learning that the French were establishing a military post and colony near the mouth of the Mississippi, as Father Gravier remarks, decided to remove thither prematurely. That a portion of the tribe had already commenced the emigration is probable, as appears from the journal of M. Penicaut.* He describes the Kaskaskias as having "already departed and established themselves within two leagues of this river [meaning the Kaskaskia] in the interior." Father Gravier deplored this step, and through personal influence induced the ultimate modification of the plan; and those of the tribe who, at the time of his arrival, still remained in their old hunting-grounds were induced by him to join their brethren in the southern portion of the Illinois country, where they continued to reside.

The remaining Illinois at Peoria and Fort St. Louis were attacked by the Foxes in 1722, but the latter were defeated and driven off with a loss of over one hundred and twenty men.

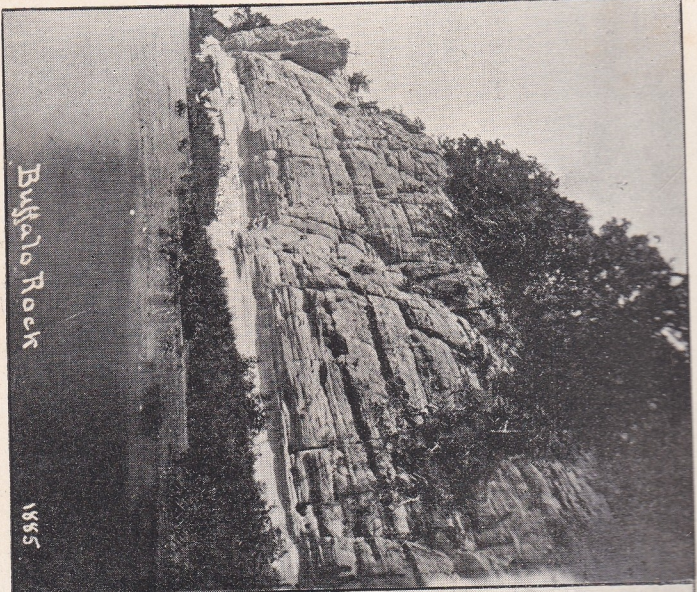
* "Journal of Leseur's Expedition to Falls of St. Anthony in 1700."

After this, however, their situation was so exposed and they were so subject to "constant alarm" that they decided, says Charlevoix, to unite with their brethren who had settled upon the Mississippi. How many of them thus changed their location can not be stated, but it seems certain that a portion, together with some confederate bands, continued at times to occupy their old villages.

The French at this period found their dusky dependants not only useful in their settlements and beneficial to their trade, but also valuable allies, rendering important services in their wars. The chief Chicagou, who had been sent by them to France in 1725, where he received the attentions due to a foreign prince, was afterward honored with a command in their expedition against the Cherokees. In 1736, the number and location of warriors in that portion of the confederacy which had been incorporated under the French government in 1718, was as follows: Mitchigamies, near Fort Chartres, two hundred and fifty; Kaskaskias, six leagues below, one hundred; Peorias, fifty; Cahokias and Tamaroas, two hundred; making a total of six hundred. They took part in the French and Indian war of 1755, but are not mentioned in any of the accounts extant of the war of Pontiac, in 1763.

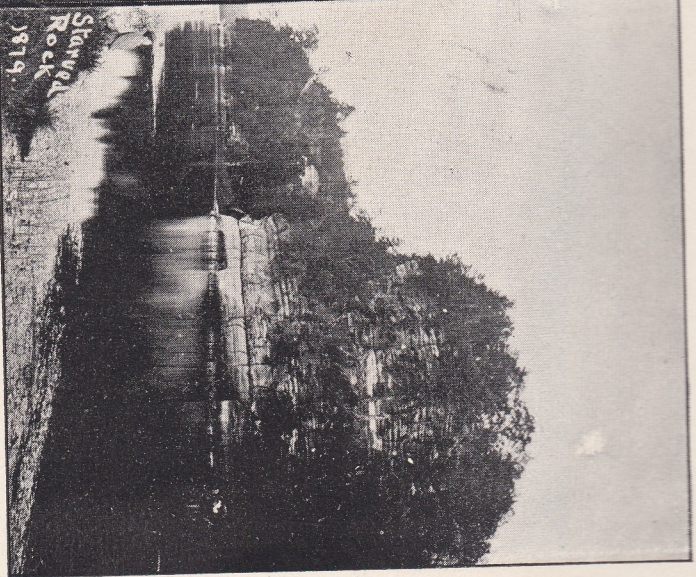
From this period their decline into a subordinate position among other tribes, and their inability to defend themselves, rendered them an easy prey to their fellow savages. They were hemmed in by relentless foes on all sides. On the southeast were the Shawnees, who, in a bloody engagement with the Tamaroas, nearly exterminated that tribe; to the northeast were the Kickapoos and Pottawatomies, against whose attacks they were able to oppose but a feeble resistance.

In 1769, having been charged with the assassination of Pontiac, some tribes with whom that great chief was connected attacked them from the north. Fugitive bands of the Illinois, fleeing from these warriors, sought to defend themselves in their ancient village of LaVantum, which they rudely fortified. Here a sanguinary engagement took place which lasted two days. Seeing that they were likely to be overcome, during a stormy night they sought refuge on the projecting bluff near by which had been the site of Fort St. Louis. Here



Buffalo Rock

1885



Slawaga
Rock

1879

they were again assaulted and besieged for twelve days. When at length their provisions were exhausted and they were unable to obtain water, hunger and thirst accomplished what their relentless foes had been powerless to effect. Determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible, those who were able made a last desperate sortie, but fell easy victims to their watchful enemies below, who, gaining access to the top of the cliff, satiated their vengeance in true savage fashion by the unsparing use of the tomahawk upon their now defenceless foes who had been too feeble to join in the last desperate encounter. Only one, a half-breed, escaped to tell the tale. Their tragic fate and whitening bones, which were to be seen for years afterward upon its summit, gave to this noted location the name of the Starved Rock, which it has ever since borne.* Such, at least, is the traditional account handed down from Indian sources.

Following their history to a later period, in 1773, the number of Kaskaskias in their village is estimated by the geographer, Thomas Hutchins, at two hundred and ten and of Peorias and Mitchigamies at two hundred and forty warriors. Col. George Rogers Clark, in his report of the conferences he had with the various tribes of Indians at Cahokia in 1778, especially mentions the Illinois, Kaskaskias, Peorias, and Cahokias as having been present, with whom and other tribes he concluded treaties.

The French villages in the Illinois country having been in possession of the British at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, the first predilections of the neighboring Indians were to ally themselves with the cause of Great Britain. But when they came to understand the true situation, as explained by Col. Clark, and learned that their ancient allies, the French, had sent ships of war and armies to aid the Americans—"the long knives," as they called them—in their struggle for inde-

* N. Matson, in his "Pioneers of Illinois," says that the Indians whose fate is here narrated constituted "the remnants of the different bands of the Illinois—in fact all that was left of them," and concludes his romantic account by stating that "thus perished the large tribe of Illinois Indians which, with the exception of a military warrior, became extinct." A statement in which Judge J. D. Caton, in his "Last of the Illinois," concurs, although the latter fixes the number who escaped at eleven. Neither of these statements are at all consistent with other well-known and established facts mentioned in the text.

pendence, they were easily persuaded to cease their hostility and transfer their friendship to the Americans.* But later they joined the Miami confederacy, and, the Kaskaskias certainly, were recognized at the making of the treaty of Greenville, in 1795, as having participated in the war, the issues of which that treaty adjusted; and were in that document placed on the same footing, as to payments for lands ceded by them, as the Kickapoos, Piankashaws, and Weas.

Coming down to the year 1800, Gov. Reynolds remarks, in his "Pioneer History," that at that time the entire Illinois confederacy numbered about one hundred and fifty. Their chief, DuCoign or DuQuoin, "a cunning man of considerable talents," had formerly paid a visit to President Washington, and, as a token of his favor, wore a medal received from him. It was in this year that, according to an historical sketch by the Rev. J. M. Peck, they encountered their hereditary enemies, the Kickapoos, Sacs and Foxes, and Pottawatomies, for the last time at Battle Creek, about twenty-five miles from Kaskaskia, where the Illinois were overwhelmingly defeated.

By the treaty of 1803, which recites the fact of their waning condition, in consideration of the increase of their annuity from \$500, under the treaty of Greenville, to \$1000, of \$300 toward building a church, and the annual payment of \$100 to a Catholic priest for seven years, they ceded all their lands, excepting a reservation of seven hundred acres, to the United States, and were thenceforward taken under the protection of the government.†

By this time drunkenness had completed their deterioration, physical as well as moral, and, from a race of hardy, valiant warriors, they had degenerated into a mere handful of idle, worthless hangers-on about the frontier settlements. Having disposed of their possessions in Illinois, the remnant of the tribe finally removed to their reservation in the Indian Terri-

* Their numbers, as reported by Capt. G. Imlay in his description of the West in 1791, were as follows: Kaskaskias, two hundred and fifty; Cahokias, two hundred and sixty; and Peorias, four hundred.

† All these facts are in conflict with the statement attributed to Gen. Harrison, made undoubtedly upon erroneous information, that the Illinois confederacy was reduced to thirty persons in 1800.

tory, where they are now, under the name of Peorias, and numbered, in 1885, one hundred and forty-nine. They are reported, by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to be "for the most part an active, well-to-do race of farmers, who live in comfortable frame-houses." Evidently they now possess but few traits of the original native—the blood has been changed.

The Miamis, having had tribal relations with the Illinois, from whom they separated prior to 1673, were called by the Iroquois and early colonists Twigh-twees. They were divided into four principal tribes, known as the Miamis proper, the Eel Rivers, the Weas, and the Piankashaws. Having, as is alleged, emigrated from west of the Mississippi, through Wisconsin, about 1672 they were found around the southern bend of Lake Michigan. In 1684, they had villages near the Starved Rock, and numbered there two thousand warriors. Later, the Weas had a village near Chicago, but left it in 1718, and, passing around the head of Lake Michigan, settled farther east near other kindred bands. The Piankashaws remained in Illinois and subsequently fixed their villages on the Vermilion and Wabash rivers, their territory extending westward to the watershed between the latter and the Illinois.

The superiority in numbers and bravery of the Miamis, and their enterprise in procuring fire-arms, enabled them to maintain their tribal independence much longer than many other confederacies. They were opposed to the French, British, and Americans by turns, and retarded the early settlement of the country by the bold and sagacious defence of their possessions. Gen. Harrison said of them that they composed the finest body of light troops in the world. They were classed with the Shawnees and Delawares as superior to other tribes in moral and intellectual qualities.

The labors of the missionaries among them were not successful. They became the enemies of the French in 1694, because of their furnishing arms to the Sacs and Foxes, and, excepting the Piankashaw division, were never afterward on good terms with them. This band, however, having their headquarters in the vicinity of Vincennes, had formed a closer intimacy with the French, even to the extent of intermarriage. On account of their friendly relations, Col. Clark easily succeeded in trans-

ferring their allegiance from the British to the Americans, and this feeling of amity was continued during the Indian wars against the whites subsequent to the Revolution, although they often innocently suffered from avenging blows, which should have fallen upon others. And, in answer to their appeal, President Washington issued his proclamation especially forbidding attacks upon them by the whites.*

The Piankashaws ceded their lands in Illinois by treaties in 1805 and 1809, and removed first to Kansas and subsequently to the Indian Territory, where they have since remained.

The Pottawatomies, formerly a subdivision of the Chippewas and Ottawas, are first mentioned in history as dwelling beyond the river St. Lawrence, and to the north of Lake Huron. In 1670, they were established at Green Bay. Their next migration was toward the south. A portion of the tribe located in Northern Michigan, another division settled in Northern Ohio, while still a third section established themselves in that part of Illinois lying north of the Kankakee and Illinois rivers and west of the territory of the Winnebagoes and Sacs and Foxes. The name signifies "we are making a fire," hence they were called by other tribes "fire-makers."

They were described as being "tall, fierce, and haughty—a warlike people, fond of hunting and fishing." They early became attached to the French, and continued on friendly relations with them in all their efforts to colonize the Northwest, during all of which period, including the French and Indian war, they were hostile to the British. They were among the most active supporters of Pontiac in his great conspiracy, and although, in the beginning of the Revolution, they joined in the border wars against the Americans, those of them in Illinois yielded to the persuasions of Col. Clark to lay down their arms. They were, however, prominent members of the Miami-Shawnee confederacy, and became parties to the treaty of Greenville. While they did not look with favor on the attempt of the Americans to settle the country, they were not so demonstrative in their hostility as some other tribes. On account of their habit of frequently roaming from one belt of timber to another, and never remaining long at one place, they were called "squatters."

* Beckwith's "Illinois and Indiana Indians."

In 1763, of the nineteen hundred and thirty warriors of the Algonquin confederacy who met Sir Wm. Johnson at Niagara, to form a treaty of peace, four hundred and fifty were Pottawatomies. This would seem to indicate that they were at this time the first in numbers, if not the most powerful, of western tribes. However this may be, as will hereafter appear, they were always "the first to be present at a treaty where lands were to be ceded, and claimed the lion's share." They united with Tecumseh, and were won over to the British cause in the war of 1812.

The Kickapoos and Mascoutins, nominally the same, were found by Father Allouez, in 1670, near the mouth of Fox River in Wisconsin. They subsequently worked their way, in opposition to the Piankashaws and Illinois, southward to the river of the latter name, thence south of the Kankakee, and still later, fighting their way, to the Vermilion, Sangamon, and Mackinaw rivers, where they remained for over a hundred years. Their villages were on the Vermilion, the Embarras, the headwaters of the Okaw, and on Sugar Creek; and their principal village at Old Mackinaw, in McLean County. They were called Prairie Indians, and although comparatively few in numbers, they were extremely fierce and strongly disposed to war. They were tall, sinewy, and active; industrious and cleanly in their habits, remarks Gov. Reynolds, and were better armed and clothed than other Indians. They were inferior to the Miamis, Delawares, and Shawnees in the management of large bodies of men, but excelled all other tribes in predatory warfare. Small parties of from five to twenty, with unequaled celerity, would swoop down upon an unprotected settlement a hundred miles distant, and, capturing the women and children, would burn the cabins, kill the cattle, and make off with the horses, before an alarm could be given.

The French were unable to influence, much less to tame, them. Superior to surrounding tribes in energy and intelligence, they were the persistent and uncompromising enemies of the whites in the very centre of the Illinois country. The early settlers on, and adjacent to, the American Bottom were for years kept in continual alarm by their midnight attacks and menacing presence. With the close of the war of 1812, to the

great relief of the pioneers, the Kickapoos ceased their hostilities. But when they finally ceded their lands, a portion of them manifested their continued dislike to the whites by refusing to settle within the limits of the United States, preferring to go to Texas. Some of them went to Mexico, while others removed first to Kansas and then to the Indian Territory, where they now reside. In 1875, the quasi-civilized portion numbered three hundred and eighty-five, and the wild Mexican band four hundred and twenty.

The Sacs or Osaukies, and Foxes, called by the French Outagamies, were two allied tribes, whose principal village was near Green Bay, where they were found in 1666, to the number of four hundred warriors. Their names were familiar as household words to the inhabitants of Illinois during the century of their menacing contiguity. Father Allouez, who first discovered them, says: "They were very much disparaged, and reputed by other natives as penurious, avaricious, thievish, and quarrelsome." Or, as Judge Hall describes them at a later period: "They were always the restless and discontented Ishmaelites of the lakes, their hand against every man and every man's hand against them." He further speaks of them, however, as "remarkable for the symmetry of their form and fine personal appearance. Few tribes resemble them in this particular; still fewer equal their intrepidity. They are physically and morally the most striking of their race. Their history abounds in tales of daring adventures and romantic incidents."

Of all the Algonquin tribes with whom the French came in contact, they alone—with their kindred, the Kickapoos—proved not only deaf to the blandishments of flattery, but unalterably obdurate to all overtures of friendship, and, indeed, utterly implacable. Except on one occasion, when a few of them joined the French in their attack upon forts George and Henry, they continued to be their irreconcilable enemies, encroaching upon their territory, dispersing their forces, and attacking their allies whenever the opportunity offered.

After numerous successful forays into the country of the Illinois, which the French at that time claimed to own, the Sacs and Foxes finally, about the year 1718, established themselves permanently on Rock River. Continuing their attacks upon the

Illinois, in conjunction with the Kickapoos, a few years later they drove them as a body south from their ancient villages. Being engaged at the time in a war with the Iowas, whom they conquered and incorporated with themselves, they took no part in the contest which ended with the treaty of Greenville. But in the war of 1812, a large portion of them, under the leadership of Black-Hawk, engaged on the side of the British. Their history thereafter will be taken up in its order.

The Winnebagoes, calling themselves "fish eaters," were of the Dakota stock. They came from the West, and for many years were engaged in war with the Illinois for the possession of the northern part of their country; but were unsuccessful, the latter claiming to have driven them back, in 1640, to the head of Green Bay, where they located and were first encountered by the French missionaries in 1647. They had the reputation of being good-natured, manly, and uncouth; they distinguished themselves for bravery in the battles with Gov. St. Clair and Gen. Wayne, and in the later wars against the whites they bore themselves with remarkable valor, being specially mentioned by Gen. Harrison in his report of the battle of Tippecanoe. They ranged themselves on the side of the British in the war of 1812.

Their territorial limits in Illinois, which had long been a subject of dispute, were settled by the Prairie-du-Chien treaty of 1825, as follows: "Southeasterly by Rock River, from its source near the Winnebago Lake [in Central Wisconsin] to the Winnebago village about forty miles above its mouth," near the mouth of the Pecatonica, in Jo Daviess County. Further mention of them will be made hereafter.

The Shawnees came from Florida and Georgia, but did not obtain a footing in Illinois until about 1750, when they located in the vicinity of that ancient town on the Ohio River which was named after them. They were a bold, roving, adventurous nation, whose leadership by Tecumseh and his brother—the Prophet, a few years later, marks a striking period in the annals of the West. They remained in Illinois only a few years, when they joined the remainder of the tribe on the Scioto River.

Between the policy of the European nations in their treatment of the American aborigines and that pursued by the United States, there exists a wide difference. The former

boldly claimed the ownership of the country with accompanying right of sovereignty. They occupied and used what land they saw fit, and paid therefor what they pleased, by way of gratuity. Of all the Europeans, there can be no doubt that the French were most successful in checking the nomadic, predatory disposition of the Indians, and establishing with them at least quasi-friendly relations. On the other hand, the Americans, under the policy marked out by the first administration under the Constitution, proceeded upon the theory of conceding the possessionary right of the natives to the public domain, of which they could be deprived only by treaty and purchase. But the red man soon perceived that he was regarded as an interloper, an inharmonious and distasteful presence which must be got rid of at any cost.

To meet the wishes, if not the imperative requirements, of the white settlers, treaties were negotiated with the Indians, whereby the latter formally ceded territory desired by the whites in consideration of money and habitations provided elsewhere. That such changes of location were not in accordance with the wishes of these "children of the forest" is indisputable. But they submitted, more or less reluctantly, to the inevitable, and a paternal government was instituted over them, by which schools were provided and other means taken to hasten their civilization. Whether this course was best for the welfare of the Indian, can not now with certainty be determined; but that it was for the interest of his white supplanter, there can be no doubt.

It must be admitted that hitherto the Nation's enforced guardianship of its two hundred and seventy thousand red men, and their attempted civilization, have not been successful. Verbose treaties have been solemnly executed with these savages, with formalities similar to those observed in entering into compacts with foreign nations, and yet these same tribes have parted with every attribute of national sovereignty. The government has loudly and repeatedly declared its intention of teaching them self-reliance, and at the same time persists in treating them as though they were children. To give them wagon-loads of toys and trinkets can not supply the place of moral example. As Judge James Hall says, "the march of mind will never penetrate into our forests by the beat of the

drum, nor civilization be transmitted in bales of scarlet cloth and glass beads."

The sums annually expended in maintaining a policy so indefensible are vast in amount. If such expenditure resulted in the moral or material advancement of those for whom it is appropriated, no voice would be raised in opposition. But so far from the disbursement resulting in the elevation of the red men, it tends to sink them lower in the depths of degradation. The governmental machinery for the outlay and distribution of these sums is complex and cumbersome, and its administration has in not a few instances given rise to grave national scandals.

The asperities of the Indian character can not be softened, nor his morals improved, by pampering his indolence and fostering his egotism. We hold these dependants "in pupilage." Neither common-sense nor reflection approves of the conduct of the parent who supports his son in idleness, while his discipline is of the most capricious character; who encourages the indulgence of his vicious propensities without instructing him how to secure an honest livelihood; or attempting to instil into his mind, by both precept and example, the duty of industry and the principles of sound morality.

But while these grave objections may be urged against the policy of our government in its dealings with the Indian question, the "Nation's wards," notwithstanding the opportunities offered them, have shown very little willingness for or capability of self-government; and in view of the fact that after half a century's experience and intercourse with civilization, the unmixed red man yet cherishes what would seem to be an ineradicable preference for the wild woods to cultivated fields, the migratory wigwam to the permanent home, and the skins of animals and blankets to the garments of civilization, the question still arises whether he possesses either the physical or intellectual organization which might enable him to reach any higher place in the scale of being than that of his aboriginal condition.*

* The following authorities have been consulted in writing the foregoing chapter: McKinney's "Indian Tribes"; Schoolcraft; Reynolds; Brown, Peck, and Beck's "Western Gazetteers"; Beckwith's "Illinois and Indiana Indians"; French's "Louisiana"; "Annals of the West"; American State Papers; Thomas Hutchins' "Topographical Descriptions"; Bancroft's "United States"; Hall's "Ill. Monthly Magazine."

